

# THE MEDALLIST

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JOHANN AND CORNELIUS DE WITT  
STRUCK SILVER, 48 MM  
1672, UNSIGNED

Inscription around:

ILLVSTRISSIMI .  
FRATRES . IOHAN :  
ET . CORNEL : DE . WIT.

MISSOURI NUMISMATIC SOCIETY  
5005 SO. GRAND AVE.  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63111  
481-7630

Two brothers de Witt, united,  
Cursed, hated and loved  
As the Groot brothers  
Who are grand and repudiated;  
Each share the same fate  
And will be united in death  
Like their picture here  
So beautifully engraved.

So reads the Dutch verse on the reverse of our cover medal. The strange story of the De Witt brothers unfolds below in the second of our series entitled - MEDALS OF VIOLENCE

Some medals tell stories as horrific as any tale dreamed up by Stephen King, the sobering difference being that the events portrayed on the cold metal actually occurred. One such historic event took place in late seventeenth century Holland during a period of unrest throughout western Europe. The

event, the slaughter of the De Witt brothers, was recorded by at least one contemporary medallist.

Pierre Aury (or Avry; French, born 1622) did a double portrait of the brothers face to face. On the back of this medal is an allegorical scene of the horrors which befell them: two men being consumed by a multi-headed beast. From the fussy wig curls and draperies on the front to the writhing imbroglia of teeth and hooves and flesh on the back, Aury's medal is the essence of rococo.

Aury signed his medal, but our cover medal is by an unknown seventeenth century hand. \* Dated 1672, the year in which the De Witt brothers met their fate, it is one of two examples each having the same obverse but with a different reverse design. Here the brothers' busts are jugate, forming a less awkward albeit a somewhat less dramatic portrait

than Aury's.

On first glance, Aury's vis a vis portraits of two men of uneven stature seem more individualized than those by our unknown artist. The latter appears to have utilized a cookie cutter to stamp the busts one atop the other. When we look more carefully, however, we see individualized portraits which are much more natural than those of the vis a vis men. Although both De Witts on the unsigned piece have deep-set eyes, thin mustaches, pouting lips and sharp chins, the nearer brother, whom we take to be Johann by his cap of office and the fact that he overshadows his sibling, has more of a hook to his proboscis and a lower, smoother forehead than has his brother. The set of the eyes differs, as does the shape of the nostrils. Our impression is that the artist was well acquainted with the brothers De Witt.

Our anonymous artist has created a medal of two dignified individuals who stare stoically into eternity, risen above their fate. It is a medal of empathy, whereas Aury's creation is a souvenir meant to shock.

The impression of sympathy for the subjects is borne out by the reverse. Instead of salivating beasts, it consists of a simple verse surrounded by leaves, flowers, scrollwork and tassels. Even if Dutch is Greek to you, when you read the words aloud, you will sense the lilting cadence of poetry: TWEE WITTEN, EENSGEZINT, / GEVLOEKT, GEHAET, GEMINT, / TEN FIEGEL VAN DE GROOTEN / VERHEVEN VERFTOOTEN, / IN ALLES LOTGEMEEN, / STAEN NAER HUN DOOT BIJEEN / GELIJK ZIJT HIER NAE'T LEVEN / ZOO KONFTIG ZIJN GEDREVEN.

The third side of the medal, the rim, has the following in raised letters: VIOLENTA MORTE DELETI HAGAE. COMITIS. 20 AVG. A°O. 1672.

The accolated portrait piece exists with another reverse, that of two ships being smashed against a rocky cliff by a raging sea.

\* Van Loon attributed all three of the De Witt medals mentioned here to Aury. Despite the fact that the compiler and the medallist were virtual contemporaries, we disagree with Van Loon's attribution on stylistic grounds.

#### TWO DUTCH BROTHERS, JOHANN AND CORNELIUS DE WITT

They must have been close companions all their lives. Born in Dordrecht in 1623 (Cornelius) and 1625 (Johann), they grew up in a comfortable affluent atmosphere, were well educated, and, while still youths, were able to make an extended tour of France, Italy, Switzerland, and England together. Power came early. In 1650 each was appointed to



CORNELIUS AND JOHANN DE WITT BY PIERRE AURY, 1672  
72 MM, SILVER. OBERSE

office in Dordrecht, and following a conflict with William II of Orange over states' rights, twenty-eight year old Johann became Holland's grand pensionary, a role which combined chief advocate, minister of justice and finance, and head of diplomacy. Johann took Cornelius with him to the Hague, granting him a governorship.

We can imagine them building adjacent homes - houses as twinlike as the brothers. We can picture warmth and laughter as the two families dine together, the plump wives in their laces, the red-cheeked children giggling and pushing at one another as the servants carry in the steaming platters. Cornelius bursts into laughter as his younger brother tells of his latest coup in negotiations with Oliver Cromwell. The peace treaty will be ratified. Johann has cleverly saved Holland from subservience to England.

The years pass. Johann continues in his brilliant career. He has led his country to a position of leadership in foreign trade. In all that he does, his brother is there to support his decisions.

In 1667, following another naval war with England, he succeeds in bringing about the Treaty of Breda. And a year later comes Johann's crowning triumph of diplomatic skill when he thwarts Louis XIV's attempt to seize the Spanish Netherlands by bringing about the Triple Alliance between the Dutch Republic, England, and Sweden.

By now, Cornelius is distinguishing himself at sea as deputy to the canny Admiral De Ruyter. When Louis makes his sudden grasping leap towards Holland in 1672, Cornelius is in the thick of the sea battles, displaying courage and leadership.

But things begin to sour. Cornelius is taken ill. Too weak to stay at sea and fight, he is put ashore and carried home to be nursed by his family. It is not a friendly atmosphere for quick recovery. Louis' invasion has sparked the populace to cry out

for William III, the young Prince of Orange, a house long the enemy of the De Witt family. Mobs of people crowd onto the brothers' street chanting their names, vilifying them. Bonfires light the night sky. Rocks are thrown. Dogs howl.



THE VIOLENT REVERSE OF AURY'S 1672 MEDAL

On July 24th Cornelius is arrested on charges of conspiracy against Prince William. Heart sick over this treachery by the people he has served for nearly twenty years, Johann resigns his post of grand pensionary. Cornelius is tortured, declared guilty of all charges, and sentenced to banishment from his beloved homeland. Johann braves the hostile streets to comfort his brother in prison. But the mob will not be still until its thirst for violence is slaked. It swells, it roars, it bursts through the prison gates, and there, in a few moments of incomprehensible savagery, the citizens of Holland rip and claw and hack the De Witt brothers apart. The remains are left hanging by the feet from a lamp post. The screams of two young widows slice through the evening air.

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The Medallist extends a special thank you to Mrs. Audrey Herman at the Netherlands Consulate General for her translation of the inscription on the reverse of the De Witt brothers medal.

NB - The De Witt brothers' family life is conjecture. The rest of their story is true. EJJ

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#### MORE ON FIDEM 87

It all begins at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, September 11th in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The first day will be a flurry of registration, delegate meetings, and press conferences, capped by the grand opening of the FIDEM '87 Exhibition in the evening.

The next four days are to be packed with medallic lectures and workshops as well as a tour of the Denver Mint and a visit to the historic mining towns

of Victor and Cripple Creek. The events of Saturday will culminate in "McDonalds Under Glass" - hamburgers and french fries served in an elegant ballroom setting, while Sunday's dinner will be an authentic Western beef barbecue. The grand finale reception and banquet will take place on Tuesday evening, September 15th.

To register for some or all of the events and to reserve hotel accommodations, write to: American Numismatic Association, 818 North Cascade Avenue, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903.

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#### AUCTION NEWS

Collectors of Americana eagerly anticipate the June 27th auction to be held at the Garden State Numismatic Convention in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Held by Presidential Coin and Antique Company, the sale will feature a "superb collection of Presidential and Inaugural items and a brilliant array of Civil War tokens". If you wish to partake in the auction or if you are interested in consigning some of your American medals for a future sale, contact: H. Joseph Levine, Presidential Coin and Antique Company, 6204 Little River Turnpike, Alexandria, Virginia 22312; Telephone 703 354-5454.

#### RECORD SET AT BETTS AUCTION

Hedley Betts' latest auction which closed on April 18th saw much spirited bidding, especially on Lot 167, a pair of first place medals awarded during the 1896 Olympic games. The silver medals, mounted in a wooden frame with the winner's name (J.P. Boland) inscribed on the back, were designed by Jules Clement Chaplain, one of the greatest medallists of all time. The obverse design is a full frontal head of Zeus; the reverse features the Acropolis.

The opportunity to possess not just one - but two - of these rare and dramatic first place awards excited bidders to go well beyond the \$5000. estimate on the lot. The pair sold for a record shattering \$10,700.

If you missed the chance to bid in this auction, you can be placed on the list for future bidding by writing to: Hedley Betts, POBox 416, Campbell, California 95009.

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#### THE LADY AND THE LION

When twenty-four year-old Mildred Howells sat for Augustus Saint-Gaudens in 1897, it was for a double portrait with her father, the well-known editor and writer, William Dean Howells. As Saint-Gaudens recalled in his *Reminiscences*, Mr. Howells "had been kind enough to speak in pleasant terms of [my] bust of Sherman.... So in appreciation of that, as well as the deep admiration which I have for his

achievement, his principles, and his delightful personality, I begged that he allow me to make his portrait and that of his daughter.... He kindly consented, and the medallion was modeled in that small studio in the stifling heat of the tropical summer, which vastly increased my admiration for him and his patience." 2

In William Dean Howells' memory, the sittings were far from painful. He remarked that the artist was "perpetually entertaining with stories and reminiscences...it was most interesting to watch the working of his mind as well as his hand. He changed the position of one of my arms, but changed it back, thoughtfully, almost ruefully. Like all artists he had a difficulty in keeping his own portrait out. He especially kept giving my daughter's profile his noble leonine nose. He could not see that he did this, but when he was convinced of it, he forced himself to the absolute fact, and the likeness remained perfect." 3

In the resulting plaque, a bronze reduction of which can now be seen in the National Portrait Gallery, Mildred and her father sit facing one another at a book-strewn table. Mildred, her left elbow on the table, her right hand on her hip, leans attentively towards the senior Howells. He lowers the papers in his hand to meet her strong young gaze.

This was the third of four times in his career that Saint-Gaudens used the device of placing his subjects face to face. His son Homer remarked that the problems inherent in such a task fascinated his father. "Unusual technical difficulties" included engineering the relief so that it looked good in "any light" as opposed to the "conventional profile medallion [which] is modeled only to be seen with the light 'coming over the shoulder'". 4

For some reason - the stifling "tropical" heat in the New York studio, perhaps - the self-set challenge was not quite met in the Howells plaque. Critic Kathryn Greenthal remarks that "the portrait of Mildred is oddly disconnected; her father is somehow out of focus". 5 A decade after modeling the plaque, Saint-Gaudens himself wrote, "when I made this medallion I felt very happy about his portrait and unhappy about that of Miss Mildred. Now...I see that the reverse would be the proper state of mind." 6

Perhaps Saint-Gaudens' problem with the plaque wasn't the temperature in the studio. Perhaps his portrait of Mr. Howells seems oddly "out of focus" because the leonine old sculptor wished that Mildred's father would magically vanish into the steamy "tropical" mists. Remembering the words of

praise which Saint-Gaudens lavished on the editor and his compulsion to "beg" to do his portrait, as well as his almost casual inclusion of "Miss Mildred" - merely because Howells had said a few "pleasant" words about one of the sculptor's statues - makes us wonder.

The artist's difficulty in capturing his female model's profile and his own confession of unhappiness over it at the time of the sittings lend further credence to an atmosphere of sublimated emotions. We may be inferring an attraction which never existed, but we do know that the sculptor was not entirely faithful to his wife Augusta, or, as the poetic Miss Greenthal expresses it, "Saint-Gaudens was a ship that sometimes ventured into uncharted waters". 7

In 1898 Saint-Gaudens had separate round plaster casts, one of each sitter, made from a reduction of the plaque. He presented young Mildred with her 21" medallion. It remained in her possession until 1957 when she donated it to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

Cornelius Varmaule in his masterful work, *Numismatic Art in America*, comments on the medallion at the Museum of Fine Arts: "Posed in simple yet heroic profile...the elegant and intelligent Miss Howells is a study in the roughness of dress and smoothness of face and uncluttered background." Mr. Varmaule adds that Saint-Gaudens had such "control over the medallion tondo" that he was able to imbue the portrait of Mildred Howells with "the same nobility in sculpture that John Singer Sargent bestowed on his sitters in painting." 8

The 70 mm gilded bronze medal reproduced on page 5 is a reduction of the reduction. It is of just the head and shoulders, the distractions of the chair, the table, and the folds of fabric covering the torso are gone. The artist has reworked the image of Miss Howells so that she no longer leans her chin upon her palm. Her somewhat aquiline features are softened by the treatment of her hair which seems to want to tumble from the pins and barrettes which hold it captive.

Saint-Gaudens placed his lovely subject with the back of her head just brushing the rim of the medal thereby leaving a large open area before the profile. This placement as well as the use of extreme bas-relief adds to the dreamy quality of the piece. Miss Howells seems lost in thought, her gaze focused on a distant object. The portrait is an intimate one, as if the sculptor were privy to the sitter's dreams and secrets. Looking at the medallion, we feel almost voyeurish, as if we should hold our breath and then tiptoe quietly away.





MILDRED HOWELLS BY AUGUSTUS SAINT-GAUDENS, 1897  
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY THE ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER  
MUSEUM, BOSTON

The intimate portrait of Miss Howells is in the Long Gallery case at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. In the case next to the medallion is a note written by Saint-Gaudens which accompanied the gift to Mrs. Gardner. We strain to read the faded ink upon the page. The words ring out quite clearly: "I wish it were mine, mostly of the original."

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#### FOOTNOTES

1. Mildred Howells (1873-1966) was a painter and poet who worked closely with her father. She illustrated a number of his books and edited his autobiography. William Dean Howells (1837-1920) was a novelist, editor and critic. As editor of Century and Atlantic he was largely responsible for the movement towards realism in American writing.
2. SG, Vol 2, p 77.
3. Ibid. pp 64-65 Embroidering further on the image of the leonine sculptor, Howells added, "His face was...like that of a weary lion, and, after our seeing him so constantly, my daughter and I were finding sculptured lions all over Europe that looked like St. Gaudens."
4. SG, Vol 1, p 219.
5. KG, p 113.
6. Op cit. SG, Vol 2, p 78.
7. Op cit. KG, p 166.
8. CV, p 99.

#### A GLOSSARY OF MEDALLIC TERMS, Part Four by Hedley Betts

**FLEUR DE COIN** ( French, literally "flower of the die" ) A truly superb piece, free of even the slightest defect.

**GALVANO** A large electrotype, usually the model from which dies are cut by a reducing machine.

**GOLD** ( Abbreviated AU OR AV from the Latin aurum ) A yellowish precious metal.

**HALLMARK** A mark, usually incusely stamped, testifying to the purity of a precious metal.

**HYBRID** ( Same as MULE ) A medal created by combining an obverse and reverse that would not normally be associated.

**INCUSE** ( The same as INTAGLIO ) Descriptive of a device or legend that sinks into the field of a medal.



**INSCRIPTION** The inscription or abbreviations written across the field of a medal or upon a device.

**INSERT DIE** A small die that can be set into a recess in a larger die. Typically, an insert die might be used to show a name or date.

**INTAGLIO** (Same as INCUSE) Descriptive of a device or legend that sinks into the field of a medal. HB  
To be continued...

#### \*\*\*\*\* UPDATE ON INGRID O'NEIL'S CATALOGUES

We always look forward to receiving one of Ingrid O'Neill's catalogues, and now we are more eager than ever because they have improved. Beginning with her 1986 List 8 and continuing in her early 1987 List 9, Miss O'Neill has added photographic reproductions of a number of the medals offered for sale. As always, there is an alphabetical list of Topics to aid collectors in their search for medals relating to Balloons, Gambling, Music, Space, Universities, etc.

List 9 includes quite a large selection of Olympics related medals including a Goetz commemorative and Placzek's art deco participation medal. There are several zeppelin medals, a 1901 Giuseppe Verdi memorial piece, and a very scarce set of Marc Chagall's "Twelve Windows" plaques. If you are

looking for something "completely different" you might be tempted by a medal celebrating the beginning of work on the Buenos Aires Subway or the signed Kapfenberg Rabbit Breeders Merit Medal.

Included on Miss O'Neill's list are a number of books such as Hugo Schnell's volume on Martin Luther medals and Klenast's 1986 supplement to his earlier work on Karl Goetz.

Miss O'Neill offers layaway terms and welcomes your want list. Please write to: Ingrid O'Neill, POBox 962, East Lansing, Michigan 48823.

#### A SMASHING ISSUE OF THE MEDAL

If there isn't an award for Most Magnificent Art Publication of the Year, there should be - complete with a medal, of course. Our nomination for 1986 is the Special Issue, Number Nine, of *The Medal*, a semi-annual publication of the British Art Medal Society in association with FIDEM.

From the front cover which gives us the rich chocolate patina of Dupré's portrait of Pierre Jeannin, to the earth-colored stone medal of Ludwig II on the back, the Special Issue of *The Medal* is a garden of delights. The magazine is lavishly illustrated. Many of the photographs are in color making us aware of what we are missing when we see reproductions of medals in black and white.

The featured artist is Guillaume Dupré in an extremely thorough and well documented article by Mark Jones. The cover photograph is of a Dupré in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Details on this medal and other pieces in the Museum's collection of Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque medals may be found in the article by Boston Curator Anne L. Poulet with Michele D. Marincola and Stephen K. Scher. Mr. Scher also contributed a fascinating analysis of a delicately wrought sixteenth century wax model.

For information on subscribing to *The Medal*, write to: Mark Jones, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London, WC1B 3DG, U.K.

#### A LOVE FOR POLISH MEDALS

Have you been searching for a medallitic tribute to "the Saint-like young Jadwiga of Anjou", Queen of Poland from 1384 to 1399? Perhaps your tastes go farther back in Polish history, to the tenth century reign of King Mieszko I and Queen Dobrawa. Your search will end as soon as you join PANA, the Polish American Numismatic Association.

Organized in 1963, the Chicago-based group offers its members historical and commemorative medals and



MIESZKO I AND DOBRAWA, 70 MM  
BY EWA OLSZEWSKA-BORYS, 1986

publishes a monthly newsletter which discusses them. Whenever possible, the artists themselves describe their work. Related articles tell of the events and subjects on the medals. Non-members may purchase medals, with PANA members receiving a substantial discount.

An annual membership is \$15, a bargain for lovers of Polish history and Polish medals. Contact: Arthur Marquart, President, Polish American Numismatic Association, POBox 1873, Chicago, Illinois 60690.

#### OUR THIRD ANNIVERSARY

This issue of *The Medallist* marks our third year of publication. We want to thank you, our readers, for your continuing support and for your many encouraging letters. Included with this issue is our anniversary present to you, a special insert entitled "The Tinkle Index". We hope you enjoy this radical departure from serious study.

Our September issue will continue the theme of Violence on Medals with the tragic stories of Edith Cavell and Marie de Page... We'll attempt to pin a "whodunit" on Benvenuto Cellini... And we'll continue to bring you the latest news in the world of medallitic art.

DON'T LET YOUR SUBSCRIPTION LAPSE! IF THERE IS A RED STAR ON THE ORDER BLANK BELOW, IT'S TIME TO RENEW.

ENCLOSED IS MY \$5.00 CHECK PAYABLE TO E.J. LEOTTI, EDITOR, FOR THE NEXT 4 ISSUES OF THE MEDALLIST.

NAME.....  
STREET.....  
CITY.....  
STATE.....ZIP.....

MAIL TO: E.J. LEOTTI, EDITOR  
THE MEDALLIST, POBox 566132  
OCEANSIDE, CA 92056

THE TINKLE INDEX  
A NEW METHOD FOR CATALOGING MEDALLIC ART  
EDUARDO PRESTO, A.K., D.M.M.

It is well known that Köchel classified and cataloged all of the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The job took him years, in fact, most of his adult life. Even so, previously unheard works show up and reclassification starts all over again. Forrer did a creditable job in creating his Biographical Dictionary of Medallists. It too has been updated by the issuance of alphabetically arranged addenda which do not fit into the previous publication. At best it is a large difficult task he (Forrer) accomplished, but it is full of inaccuracies and it remains unfinished.

That sort of scholarship is all behind us now. I, EDUARDO PRESTO, have undertaken to classify all medals made of bronze, brass, silver or gold by their musical signature.

Any third year high school student knows that sound vibrations given off by any piece of metal will vary according to the content and mass. (Well, some third year high school students will know that.) Every medal when struck (gently and with a plastic striking instrument created at great expense in our laboratories) emits its own musical sound, peculiar to that medal and all others made at the same time and made also of the same batch of metal; that is, metal founded in one batch.

Our laboratories have also devised a method of measuring and identifying the sound vibrations emitted. We at first attempted to work out an arrangement with that eminent musicologist and metascientist, Dr. Peter Schickele, a.k.a. P.D.Q. Bach. Unfortunately his schedule is so heavy that he could not find the time to listen to our medals, nor could he work them into his act. That last part is what we offered him in exchange for his expertise.

Our only recourse was to do it ourselves. Difficult as it seems, and after many years of study, we got the the project off the table and have made wonderful progress. Our large cash outlay over the years has been for such highly technical instruments as a pitch pipe, a tuning fork and a metronome.

Even now as I write this my staff and I are toiling in the tinkling caverns of medallic musicality. Momentous discoveries are taking place. For instance the medal by H. Dubois of the old bourgeois fountain of Bruxelles emits a definite E# above C. That's tinkling.

Our catalog of medals will be forthcoming eventually. This is a horrendous job so you will have to do something beside whistle "Dixie" while you wait. All medals will be listed on standard music paper in the usual 1000 sheet scroll. Volume I will be offered at the unheard of price of \$37,999.99. Now, that may seem high, but it includes a small upright player piano to play all your volumes of MM (Medallic Music) at any time of the day or night. Astound your neighbors, improve your image in the community, entertain the intelligentsia. ORDER YOUR FIRST VOLUME TODAY BEFORE THE PRICE GOES UP.

Sorry, we cannot send the first scroll without the piano, your second scroll maybe. Subsequent scrolls (volume II etc.) will be announced when ready for publication.

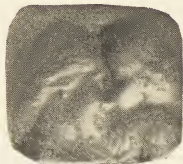
I urge all contemporary medallists to get their works classified soon in order to be included in the next scroll.

WATCH YOUR MAIL FOR FURTHER BULLETINS.....

# THE MEDALLIST

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 2, SEPTEMBER 1987. PUBLISHED QUARTERLY.

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Two plaquettes by  
Ovide Yencesse (1869-1947)

Above: "Tendrissée Maternelle"  
58 x 38 mm. Bronze

Right: "Enfant aux Roses"  
34 x 54 mm. Bronze



OVIDE YENCESSE, A PERSONAL REMEMBRANCE  
By M.F.K. Fisher

You probably know that Ovide Yencesse became one of the best medallists in the world because he was so small. He told me that he simply could not handle the big mallets and chisels that he would have needed to use. He discussed this at length with Rodin, and agreed with the older man's advice that he become a medallist. I think Ovide Yencesse was basically bitter and frustrated, but he seemed to send out waves of true gentleness and subtle power. He was married to a large woman, and they had a huge family - something like twelve children as I remember, all of them tall, strong, handsome people. They were very generous, and what I think could truly be called ebullient. They lived in a shabby old villa a little outside of Dijon, and held open house every Sunday, and ate and drank and danced to records and occasionally to live music provided by friends.

I went to Dijon in 1929, and the first year there I went to night classes at Beaux Arts with M. Yencesse. The second year I was more serious about it, and went every day in the mornings, three times a week to him and two to the other famous teacher there whose name I forget - a very second-rate, socially prominent water colorist. He was much less of an artist than Yencesse but everybody said he was head of Beaux Arts because he was a Count in Burgundy. He was said to be extremely jealous of Yencesse, artistically I suppose. Yencesse was completely without social pretensions, and with his family lived a rich, noisy, full life. As I

remember, the two men were never seen together in public, although Yencesse was not at all self-conscious of his tiny size.

He was not even five feet tall, and everything about him was in perfect scale. He moved rather like Charlie Chaplin, very gracefully but never effeminately or even daintily. He had a thick head of rather short hair, and a rather full but pointed beard, and dark eyes. He was always extremely courteous with me, and when we met in public he bowed and kissed my hand. In the ateliers he was business-like and often rather brutal, mostly to the men-students when they did something clumsy or really poor in the large statues and things that they worked on. They were a mixture of young Italian apprentices to the people who provided elaborate tombs and headpieces in the cemeteries, plus a few very serious young artists studying for Paris and heading bravely for the Prix de Rome. There were a few dilettantes, of both sexes, and of the upper classes in Burgundy. The girls and women headed mostly for their peer, the water colorist, and for a long time I was the only women working with Yencesse.

For a long time I was in the same atelier with the boys, and paid little attention to them. (I was newly married and deeply in love, for one thing..) Then one morning I found my stuff moved out into a long gallery where we kept the tubs of clay, and M. Yencesse apologized to me for this apparent isolation and said that he had a real row before his classes started that day, because when he went into the big atelier he found that one of the boys had stuck a banana in each of the life-size clay statues that several of the students were working on. (I can't even write about this without chuckling because we both started off with such complete and bland politeness.)

He managed to imply that I was far too innocent and naive and generally well bred to have understood the crude and suggestive trick that some rude fellow had pulled off in hopes of embarrassing me. I, in turn, played to the hilt the role he had cast me in, and did not even blush or lower my eyes or titter, all of which he fully expected me to do.

That's the end of the story of course, except that I remember very vividly how really pained and embarrassed he was as he tried to explain to me why I had to continue to work all alone in that long gallery.... In fact, I suspect that he discussed the



whole thing with the water colorist and that between the two they managed to get me more interested in going to the silly classes with all the other young ladies, where we sat unsmilingly, drawing a handsome Italian, stark naked, for several hours each morning. Now and then I would hear a great roar of laughing and talking from M. Yencesse's rooms, and I wished I could be there instead of in such comparatively discreet company.

MFKF

M.F.K. Fisher, hailed by critics as America's greatest living prose writer, is the author of many books including *How to Cook a Wolf*, *Among Friends*, *A Cordial Water*, and *Sister Age*. She made her home in France for a number of years and now resides in Glen Ellen, California. "Ovide Yencesse, A Remembrance" appears in print here for the first time. We are honored indeed to have Mrs. Fisher's words grace our pages.

EJL

#### OVIDE YENCESSE...

Ovide Yencesse was born in Dijon in 1869. He studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris under the renowned medallist Hubert Ponscarne. Yencesse entered his medals and plaquettes in world-wide exhibitions winning many awards. For much of his adult life he was the director of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Dijon. He died in 1947.

#### .. AND SOME EXPERT OPINIONS OF HIS WORK

"The relief scarce rises from the body of the medal, and a sort of twilight haze envelops the whole work, as in the paintings of Eugene Carriere. Never was the close union existing between painting and glyptics more perfectly expressed." Roger Marx in *International Studio*, 1901, (p.26).

"Yencesse...wrought into his work great subtlety of plan and effective color." V.D. Brenner in his 1910 treatise, "The Art of the Medal" (p.13).

"Some of the medals were worked out in relief so low and with outlines so obliterated that they resembled shaded drawings or paintings rather than modeled work, as in the Millet-like medals of peasants at work by Ovide Yencesse." A. Piatt Andrew reviewing the 1910 Exhibition at the American Numismatic Society in New York in the *Numismatist*, July 1910 (p.174).

"M. Yencesse borrows from the world of painting with his clever use of patinas." Michele-Andree Guy writing in *Arethuse*, Oct 1924 (p.LXIX); translated from the French by EJL.

"His softened reliefs, such as 'The Babe's Kiss' and 'Mother Love', are drowned in a misty light...Thus

he expresses himself in these airy light tableaux," Jean Babelon in *La Medaille en France*, 1943 (p.116.); translated from the French by EJL.

"...even the figures in his extravagantly sentimental struck works seem to inhabit a strange, half-lit world." Mark Jones in *The Art of the Medal*, 1979 (pp.124-127).

[His work] "was very misty and vague, but technically it was exquisite...very subtle." M.F.K. Fisher, July 1987 correspondence.

#### A FEW WORDS ON EVALUATION

Unlike coins, medals are generally very difficult to evaluate. Rarity may not play as large a role as fame of the artist, and condition, as regards holling, rim nicks, etc., sometimes has no influence on price at all. Editions are almost never known, and some medals, designed centuries ago, are still being issued today. The Paris Mint continues to strike from dies by Roettiers, Andrieu, Roty and Chaplain, among others, and anyone may purchase a modern copy of DuVivier's Washington Before Boston medal from the U.S. Mint, although the original dies have long since deteriorated.

Every collector is aware that prices often depend more on the whim of the seller than on any more exacting measuring stick. Who among us has not basked in the glow of his great coup - finding a prized piece lying in the dusty case among Wilkie buttons, paste jewelry, Boy Scout patches, and bent hatpins, and purchasing it, without argument, for less than a tenth of its recent auction sale price? On the other side of the coin, if we may be forgiven the expression, is the antique dealer who places a \$100. price tag on Sinnock's 1930 medal for the R.T. Crane Company, which, by the way, was one of a whopping edition of 115,000.

On occasion, circumstances combine to allow current evaluation of a particular group of medals. In this instance, the grouping is the first forty issues of the Society of Medallists, which editions were recently closed by Medallist Art Company. Thirty-eight of these, most described as UNC (uncirculated condition), came up for sale at Presidential Coin & Antique's January 1987, auction, and all were sold. Presidential Coin's June 1987, auction included a dozen from the "top forty", also rated UNC. From these two auctions, plus recent sales information supplied by other dealers we have compiled the following list of current values.

#### SOCIETY OF MEDALISTS FIRST FORTY ISSUES, 1930-1949

#	Artist	Edition	Value in EF to UNC
1	Fraser, L	3,235	\$ 31 - 52
2	Manship	1,950	56 - 93

#	Artist	Edition	Value in EF to UNC
3	McNeill	1,713	\$ 33 - 53
4	MacMonnies	1,989	57 - 83
5	Lawrie	1,617	22 - 44
6	Flanagan	1,494	46 - 75
7	Jennwein	1,237	25 - 66
8	Cecere	1,287	25
9	Adams	1,207	22
10	Laessle	1,021	55
11	Taft	1,025	35 - 55
12	deFrancisci	1,165	30
13	McKenzie	1,001	40 - 50
14	Stewart	968	25
15	Aitken	1,160	22 - 30
16	Beach	941	37 - 38
17	Calder	891	33 - 44
18	Lathrop	1,025	62
19	McCartan	937	55
20	Gregory	937	44 - 50
21	Amateis	921	25
22	Hancock	894	28 - 35
23	Renier	849	25
24	Springweiller	999	25
25	deCoux	767	22 - 26
26	Putnam	759	30 - 58
27	Huntington	747	50 - 146
28	Schmitz	849	32
29	Rocchia	891	45
30	Young	710	28 - 50
31	Chambellan	1,501	51 - 55
32	Nabel	839	40
33	Kisele	802	25
34	Waugh	1,812	25
35	Moore	764	35
36	Kreis	599	25
37	Lantz	730	20 - 25
38	LoMedico	727	25
39	Weinman, A	785	30
40	Freidlander	797	23

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481-7630

"BEAUX-ARTS MEDAL IN AMERICA" EXHIBITION AT ANS

September 26th is opening day for a noteworthy new exhibition at the American Numismatic Society in New York City. Slated to run through April 16, 1988, "The Beaux-Arts Medal in America" is a show that lovers of fine medallion art cannot afford to miss. Included will be work by the best of the era: Augustus Saint-Gaudens, John Flanagan, Janet Scudder, Daniel C. French and A.A. Weinman. Many of the medals, plaques and galvanos shown will be on display for the first time since the International Exhibition of Contemporary Medals held at the American Numismatic Society in 1910.



HEAD OF VICTORY, 1917, BY D.C. FRENCH, ONE OF THE BEAUX-ARTS MEDALS TO BE SHOWN AT THE A.N.S.

The opening of the exhibition will be celebrated by a two day symposium, "The Medal in America", on September 26th and 27th. Among the fourteen scholars presenting papers at the symposium are Cornelius Vermuele of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Dorothy Bartle of the Newark Museum, and J. V. Noble, Director of the Society of Medalists.

The \$25 registration fee for the symposium includes admission to all sessions and the Saturday opening reception for "The Beaux-Arts Medal in America", plus a copy of the Conference Proceedings to be published in book form. After the Conference, copies will be available from the Society for \$15.

An illustrated catalogue of the "Beaux-Arts Medal in America" exhibition by Guest Curator Barbara Baxter will be available to Conference attendees at the special price of \$20. After September 27th, it may be ordered from the ANS for \$25.

To register for "The Medal in America" Symposium, write to: Leslie A. Elam, Director, American Numismatic Society, Broadway at 155th Street, New York, N.Y. 10032; or telephone 212 234-3130. Exhibit hours for "The Beaux-Arts Medal in America" are 10 to 4:30 Tuesday thru Saturday and 1 to 4:30 Sundays.

One of the dealers who was kind enough to supply us with sales figures on the SOM medals was Ingrid O'Neill.\* It was she who provided the high price on # 27 by Anna Hyatt Huntington. \$146, is the U.S. equivalent of DM270 which the EF medal commanded at a March, 1987 auction in West Germany - plus a 15% buyer's fee. It seems that European collectors place a higher valuation on our artists than we do. Is \$146, too high a price to pay for this medal? Consider these points:

1. Anna Hyatt Huntington (1876 - 1973) was one of the greatest sculptors who ever lived.
2. She executed very few medals (We know of 5).
3. Her SOM medal is the only one which the average collector is apt to find for sale.
4. Only 747 of Huntington's SOM medal were struck - among the smallest editions of the "Top Forty".

\* For a copy of Ingrid O'Neill's latest medal list, write to: POBox 962, East Lansing, Michigan 48823.

## MEET THE MEDAL DEALER

If you collect Judaic medals, you will want to know William M. Rosenblum, Rare Coins. Mr. Rosenblum has been buying, selling and collecting medals for nearly twenty years. His specialty is "any Jewish-related material, especially pre-20th century."

Look for Mr. Rosenblum at the larger national coin shows such as the Greater New York Numismatic Convention and the Long Beach, California shows, as well as most Denver, Colorado shows. If you prefer to do your collecting from the comfort of your own office, write and ask for his latest mail bid sale and / or fixed price list. These are sent free to buyers or for \$10. a year to those who want them for reference only. Lists include some photographs. If you are interested in an item which is not pictured Mr. Rosenblum will provide a photo at a minimal cost.

We were impressed with the number of medals on a recent "Israel-Palestine-Judaic List". There were approximately 50 in the Mail Bid section, all of them carefully described and referenced. Among books listed for sale we found Friedenberg's Jewish Medals, from the Renaissance to the Fall of Napoleon and Sylvia Haffner's Judaic Tokens and Medals. Mr. Rosenblum promises a fall sale which "could be our largest yet". If you collect Judaica or just want to learn more about it, write or call: William M. Rosenblum/ Rare Coins, POBox 355, Evergreen, Colorado 80439; Tel. 303 838-4831.

## MEDALS OF VIOLENCE

For the third in our series of Medals of Violence we jump from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century. Sadly, the "civilized" world has not learned much about humanity in the intervening decades, a fact of which this medal speaks most eloquently as it tells us not just one but two tales of violence.

### ONE: MARIE DE PAGE

April 30, 1915. New York City. It is a balmy spring day on Central Park West where a lovely and delicate-looking woman is winding up her two-month U.S. speaking tour to raise funds for her native war-ravished Belgium. She is Marie de Page, wife of Antoine de Page, Surgeon-General to the Belgian Army and head of the Queen's Hospital at La Panne. Her seventeen-year old son has just enlisted in the Belgian army, and she herself has served tirelessly giving comfort to wounded men of both sides at her husband's hospital. She would be there still but for her appointment by the king and queen as Special Envoy to the United States. Her tour has been a success. She has elicited more than \$150,000 in pledges from sympathetic Americans nationwide.

In order to address the Special Relief Society in New York, Madame de Page has made a last minute change in her steamship passage home. She has cancelled today's sailing on the Lapland and booked a stateroom on a liner sailing tomorrow morning - the Cunard Line's magnificent Lusitania.

May 5. On board the Lusitania steaming across the Atlantic. Marie de Page is engaged in earnest conversation with American physician James Houghton, recruited as an assistant to her husband in Belgium. She mentions Edith Cavell, an English nurse who organized Dr. de Page's first clinic and whom she hopes to bring to Queen's Hospital to work with Dr. Houghton.

May 7. 8 Deck, the Lusitania. The peaceful sunlit day has been shattered. The immense liner is listing crazily and hideous creaking and cracking noises fill the air. The ship has been torpedoed by a German submarine. Dr. Houghton, who has been searching for Marie de Page, finds her helping women and children into lifeboats, then turning calmly to bandage the hand of an injured man. She is not wearing a life jacket, so Dr. Houghton removes his own and fastens it around her, advising her as he does that the time has come to jump into the frigid sea. Another passenger sees them and notes that Marie's eyes are "wide and startled, but brave". 1

Dr. Houghton and Madame de Page plunge into the water together, into a firsam of roiling debris - splintered lifeboats, floating ropes, crushed deck chairs - and they are immediately separated. She becomes entangled in the thick lines, and even though he struggles to swim to her, the doctor must watch helplessly as she is swept away to her death.

### TWO: EDITH CAVELL

She was a pretty woman, not as attractive perhaps as Marie de Page, but slim and neat with eyes that burned with dedication to her chosen career. Born in Norfolk, England in 1865, she was nearly thirty when she began her nursing studies at London Hospital. Seven years later she went to Brussels where she became the First Matron of the Berkendael Medical Institute, a clinic and nursing-school which was the first of its kind in Europe.

Edith Cavell was working in Brussels when Germany invaded Belgium in August, 1914. There she became part of an underground railroad for wounded English, French, and Belgian soldiers, hiding them from the Germans, nursing them back to health, and handing them over to carefully selected guides who led them into Holland. Due to her efforts, at least two hundred men were able to escape capture by the Germans. At the same time, her regular nursing duties saw her tending wounded men from both sides with equal devotion.

When she was arrested by the Germans on August 5, 1915, Edith Cavell readily admitted her part in aiding the escapees. On October 8, she was court-martialled and sentenced to death. Despite the outraged cries of both Britain and the United States, as well as the efforts of several Belgian, American and British dignitaries on her behalf, Nurse Cavell was brought before a firing squad on October 12. Her dignified bearing and calm last words, "Patriotism is not enough," touched the hearts of millions around the globe.

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#### Footnotes:

1. H & H, p 130.



MARIE DE PAGE / EDITH CAVELL  
 60 MM BRONZE BY ARMAND BONNETAIN

The sensitive double portrait of Marie de Page and Edith Cavell both facing to left and "crowned" with a branch of laurel was struck within months of their deaths. The reverse is simple and poignant: 1915 / Remember!

The designer of the medal was Armand Bonnetain who was born in Brussels, Belgium in 1883 and who died in that city at the age of ninety. Leonard Forrer described Bonnetain's medals as having originality and truthfulness. According to Benedit, much of Bonnetain's sculptural work is owned by the Royal Museum of Beaux-Arts in Brussels. Another example of his work, a 1935 award plaque, is below.



#### A GLOSSARY OF MEDALLIC TERMS, Part Five By Hedley Betts

**IRON** ( Abbreviated FE from the Latin ferrum ) A grey, magnetic metal used to make medals in Germany around the period of the first world war, especially large cast satirical pieces. Otherwise, iron has rarely been used to make medals.

**JETON** A coin-like piece originally used as an aid in performing calculations.

**JUDENMEDAILLE** ( German, literally "Jewish medal" ) A type of medal reputed to have been made by Jewish goldsmiths in Prague in the late 16th or early 17th century. Cast and chased, they are thin and resemble hammered coins. There is little evidence to support the theory that they were made by Jewish artisans.

**JUGATE** ( The same as ACCOLATED and CONJOINED ) Describes two or more portraits facing in the same direction and overlapping.

**LAUREATE** Descriptive of a person or object decorated with a laurel wreath.

**LEAD** ( Abbreviated PB from the Latin plumbum ) A soft, grey metal used occasionally in Renaissance times for medals, but otherwise rarely for medals.

**LEGEND** The writing on a medal that runs around it, parallel to its edge.

**LUSTER** or **LUSTRE** The original bright metallic color of a medal ( usually copper or bronze ).

**MEDAL** 1) A generic term for a coin-like object without status as legal tender and not intended for exchange or trade.

2) More specifically, a circular piece, usually between an inch ( about 25mm ) and 3 inches ( about 75mm ) in diameter.

3) An official award or decoration.

**MEDALLET** A small medal, usually less than an inch ( 25mm ) in diameter.

**MEDALLION** 1) A large medal, usually more than 3 inches ( 75mm ) in diameter.

2) A large commemorative Roman coin.

3) A generic term for all types of medals other than official awards or decorations.

**MIGNON SCALE** A scale for measuring coins and medals devised by the 19th century French numismatist, Mionnet. The scale comprises several numbered circles of varying sizes. The size of a coin or medal is indicated by the number of the circle closest in size.



# AUCTION NEWS

Robert and Sheila Levin of World Art Medals are pleased to announce two exciting upcoming auction events. The first will be their Fall Auction of Historical Medals which will consist of 365 items including an extremely rare 1763 Cuban commemorative of the Defense of Fort Moro, five rare silver Art Union of London issues, an 1828 Russian Noah's Ark medal and several World War II items. Jaques Wiener is represented by sixteen architectural pieces and David d'Angers by an "exceptionally fine and rare" bronze plaque of Napoleon estimated at \$350.



NAPOLÉON BY DAVID D'ANGERS, BRONZE 145 X 155 MM  
LOT 155 IN WORLD ART MEDALS' FALL AUCTION

Of interest to collectors of Olympic medals will be the 54.5 mm silver medal from the 1924 Winter Olympics at Chamonix which is expected to bring \$1800. Other Olympics commemoratives include one from the 1908 games (reverse pictured below). Also shown is the reverse of a 1641 John Calvin portrait medal by Sebastian Dädler.



TWO ANGELS FROM WORLD ART MEDALS' UPCOMING FALL AUCTION: LEFT, REVERSE OF LOT 284 BY MACKENNA - RIGHT, REVERSE OF LOT 335 BY DÄDLER

Also in the works is World Art Medals' winter auction of World's Fair and Exposition Medals.

Slated for early January, it will feature more than 500 items dating from 1851 through the 1980's - the largest such grouping ever to be offered to the public. The fully illustrated catalogue is expected to become the standard reference guide for exposition medals.

World Art Medals is offering Medallist readers a free copy of the Fall Auction Catalogue to be published in early September. Simply write to: World Art Medals, POBox 6601, Philadelphia, PA 19149.

## MORE AUCTION NEWS

D. Wayne Johnson has announced the formation of a new company, Collectors' Auctions Ltd., which will specialize in the sale of medals. Mr. Johnson is well-known to collectors as the head of the former prestigious auction house of Johnson & Jensen, renowned for the quality of both its sale items and its catalogues. Following a two year hiatus, Mr. Johnson promises to bring us top quality once again.

The first Collectors' Auction is scheduled for September 13, 1987. It will be held at the Greater New York Coin Convention. Mail bids are invited.

Anyone wishing to consign medals for sale and/or to be placed on the new firm's mailing list should contact: D. Wayne Johnson, Collectors' Auctions Ltd., POBox 2207, Danbury, CT 06813.

## THE MEDALLIST IS ON THE MOVE

Our new address is listed below, but you won't find us there. For the next year or so The Medallist will come to you from a motorhome on which we will travel throughout the United States in search of medallist art, history and news. We welcome suggestions from any of you on where to look for medal collections or exhibitions, the birthplace of a medallist artist, or a person, city or event commemorated on a U.S. medal which you would like to know more about. Drop a line to the address below and it will be forwarded to us.

Apologies to those of you who anticipated the Cellini "Whodunit" in this issue. It will appear in the December Medallist.

DON'T LET YOUR SUBSCRIPTION LAPSE! A RED STAR ON THE ORDER BLANK BELOW MEANS IT'S TIME TO RENEW.

ENCLOSED IS MY \$5. CHECK FOR THE NEXT 4 ISSUES OF THE MEDALLIST.



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# THE MEDALLIST

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 3, DECEMBER 1987, PUBLISHED QUARTERLY IN THE U.S.A.



This cleanly cut medal with its beautifully balanced lettering seems a fitting portrait of Pietro Bembo, the "beau ideal of a purist" who strove to attain perfection in his writing by emulating the style of the classics. 1

Bembo, who was born in 1470, was a great scholar and humanist. His published works include a history of his native Venice, poems, essays, and dialogues. He served as secretary to Pope Leo X from 1513 until the latter's death in 1521. Bembo was made a cardinal in 1539 by Pope Paul III.

In the interim years between his service to Leo and his appointment to cardinal, Pietro Bembo lived in splendor in Padua, researching classical literature and history. It was here, probably in 1537, that the famed metal worker and sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571) met the scholar and began to model his likeness.

According to Cellini's autobiography, a study in braggadocio, Bembo virtually kidnapped the artist, providing him with quarters splendid enough to "honor a cardinal" and insisting on his company at every meal. As Benvenuto tells it, Bembo's motivation was to be immortalized by the great artist whom he had managed to capture in his palatial home.

"Gradually he began to insinuate, with great modesty, that I might do his portrait. I desired nothing better in the world. So I mixed some clean fine white plaster of Paris in a box, and began. The first day I worked two hours on end, and

CARDINAL PIETRO BEMBO OF VENICE (1470-1547)

MID 16TH CENTURY, BRONZE, 56.5 MM

ATTRIBUTED TO THE MILANESE SCHOOL

POSSIBLY BY CELLINI

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY THE UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM

SIGMUND MORGENROTH COLLECTION

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

MISSOURI NUMISMATIC SOCIETY  
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APR 17 1980



sketched his fine head with such grace that his lordship was astounded."

Cellini continues, "It must be said that though he was eminent in letters, and in the highest rank of poets, yet of my art he understood nothing at all. So he thought I had finished when I had hardly begun, and I could not make him see that it wanted a great deal of time to do the thing well. However, I made up my mind to do my best and give it all the time it deserved; but as he wore a short beard, in the Venetian fashion, I had a deal of trouble to model the head so that it satisfied me."

"Still I did finish it, and I thought I had never done so fine a thing, judged from the point of view of my art. But he was dismayed, for he had thought, as I had done the first rough model in two hours, I should cast it in ten; and now he saw that I had not completed the wax in two hundred hours, and I was asking leave to go off to France."

"This distressed him greatly; and he entreated me first to do him a reverse for the medal at least, the design to be a Pegasus within a myrtle wreath. I did it in about three hours, and put my most elegant work into it."

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
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APR 17 1980

"He was much pleased, but he said, 'This horse seems to me ten times more difficult to do than the little head over which you slaved so long. I do not understand why it was so hard to do.' I said I was not willing to do it at the moment; but in whatever place I stopped to work I should finish it without fail." 2

Some students of the work of Benvenuto Cellini and of sixteenth century medallic art have hesitated to attribute the medal shown here to Cellini's hand. As proof against it, many cite the fact that the perfectly balanced lettering reads PETRI BEMBI CAR although Bembo did not go to Rome to don the mantle of cardinal until 1539, two years after he sat for the egotistic artist.

The fact that Bembo wears a long beard rather than a short one "in the Venetian style" and the absence of a wreath of myrtle surrounding Pegasus on the reverse also tend to give scholars pause in assigning the medal to Cellini.

The catalogue of the Morgenroth collection of which the present example is a part ascribes the work to the Milanese school mentioning a former (1883) and presumably inaccurate attribution by E. Plon to Cellini.

Stephen K. Scher, writing recently in the scholarly British journal *The Medal*, tells us that early twentieth century authority Georg Habich assigned a group of mid-sixteenth century Milanese medals, including the one in question, to "a Master of Cardinal Bembo". Scher states, "There is little justification for this designation." 3

John Pope-Hennessy argues for Cellini as the author of this "work of great distinction. The style of the portrait head corresponds reasonably well with that on the medal of Francis I, which Cellini seems to have made on his first visit to France [following his departure from Bembo's Paduan mansion]. It is probable therefore that the model of 1537 was modified at a later stage, and that the surviving medal is by Cellini." 4

#### CELLINI'S VITA

Artistically, Benvenuto Cellini is best known to the world for the fabulous gold and enamel salt cellar surmounted with the figures of Neptune and a nereid which he designed for Francis I of France. As to his life, it is best described by Cellini himself. For anyone who has neglected to read it, we quote from an enthusiastic review:

"Not less characteristic of its splendidly gifted and barbarically untameable author are his autobiographical memoirs begun in Florence in 1558 - a production of the utmost energy, directness, and

racy animation, setting forth one of the most singular careers in all the annals of fine art. His amours and hatreds, his passions and delights, his love of the sumptuous and the exquisite in art, his self-applause and self-assertion, make this one of the most singular and fascinating books in existence." 5

To further whet your appetite, here are three more of Cellini's medallic escapades from Anne Macdonell's translation of the *Vita*:

"I became very friendly with Signor Gabriele Ceserino, Gonfalonier of Rome, and for him I did a great deal of work, amongst other notable things a large gold medal to wear in a hat. The engraved design on it was Leda with her swan. Being much pleased with my work, he said he would like to have it valued so that I might be fairly paid. But the medal had been made with great skill, and the valuers in the trade put a much higher price on it than he had thought it would cost. And so I kept the medal in my own hands, and got nothing at all for my pains." 6

"I was working at a gold medal for wearing in a hat, the design...a Hercules wrenching the lion's mouth open...[and] Michel Agnolo Buonarroti came several times to see it. Now I had taken a great deal of pains with it, and the attitude of the figure was so fine, and the spirit of the animal so admirably expressed, that it had nothing in common with the work of such artists as had designed the same kind of thing before. Then, also, my method of working was entirely new to the divine Michel Agnolo. And so he praised my work; and this was such an incitement to me to do well as I cannot describe."

"Now...Federigo Ginori...wishing to have a medal made - Atlas with the world on his shoulders to be the subject - he asked the great Michel Agnolo to make a sketch of a design. He answered Federigo thus: 'Go and seek out a young goldsmith called Benvenuto. He will serve you well...But that you may not think I seek to shirk such a trifle, I'll make a sketch with pleasure. Meanwhile, speak to Benvenuto, and let him make a little model as well. Then the better design of the two can be carried out.'" 7

After Benvenuto had won the competition, hands down of course, and had completed the medal, "the most excellent Michel Agnolo saw it, [and] he praised it more than I can tell. It was...a figure engraved on a thin plate of gold...The whole thing was indescribably beautiful." 7

"In those days little gold medals were much in fashion, and noblemen and men of rank had some emblem of their own devising engraved on these, and they wore them in their caps. I made a great many,

and it was no easy task. Now Caradosso [Cristofano Caradosso c1445-1527], the very clever artist...did this kind of work; and as his designs contained more than one figure, he would not sell them for less than a hundred gold crowns a piece. So I was preferred to him by certain gentlemen, yet not so much on account of his high prices as because he was a slow worker.

For these customers I made...a medal in competition with this great artist. There were four figures on it, over which I took a great deal of trouble. Now as it fell out, when these nobles and gentlemen put mine alongside that of the famous Caradosso, they declared it to be much better made and more beautiful, and said I might ask whatever I liked for my trouble...Whereupon I said the best reward of my labours, and the one I most desired, was to have equalled the work of so accomplished a man, and that if their honours were of this opinion I held myself to be handsomely paid. And thus I took my leave." 8

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#### Footnotes

1. EB Vol 3 p 391.
2. AM pp 200-201.
3. SS p 18.
4. JP-H p 80.
5. EB Vol 5, p 97.
6. AM pp 45-46.
7. Ibid. pp 87-89.
8. Ibid. pp 62-63.

#### THE MORGENROTH COLLECTION

Robert Schroeder, the Registrar of the Art Museum at the University of California at Santa Barbara, tells us that a major exhibition of the Morgenroth Collection of medals will be mounted within the next five years. Also in the works is a new catalogue which will feature photographs of all of the medals and plaquettes which comprise this most magnificent gathering of Renaissance art.

The Morgenroth Collection was acquired in Europe prior to the Second World War and brought to this country in the early 1940's by its owner, described then as "one of the most eminent scholars and

connoisseurs in the field of Renaissance art", Sigmund Morgenroth. The collection had never had a public exhibition before 1943 when it was displayed at the UC Santa Barbara Art Museum.

Since then the Art Museum has become permanent home to the collection which consists of more than 400 portrait medals, religious and art plaquettes, and a library of books and auction catalogues. The fine selection of early Italian pieces includes a dozen Pisanellos, a like number of del Pastis, and several examples from the hands of Candida, Abondio, and Fiorentino. German masters include Hans Schwarz, Matthes Gebel, and Peter Floetner. The Biblical plaquettes would by themselves constitute an outstanding collection. Among these is a unique Christ Carrying the Cross "very tentatively" attributed to Christoph Jamnitzer, a late seventeenth century Nuremberg medallist. Of high relief, the piece is finely modeled and beautifully detailed. It alone is worth a visit to the UC Santa Barbara Museum.

The 1944 catalogue, Medals and Plaquettes from the Sigmund Morgenroth Collection by Ulrich Middelorf and Oswald Goetz is long out of print, although you may be able to locate a copy through a medal dealer. Only a portion of the collection is illustrated in the catalogue, and, having viewed the collection first-hand on two occasions, we can safely state that the photography does not do justice to the extremely fine quality of workmanship therein. If you are a serious student of Renaissance art, this is a collection you will want to visit.

To arrange to view the collection please contact one of the Museum staff at least two weeks in advance. Call or write: Robert F. Schroeder, Registrar, or J. David Farmer, Director, Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, California 93106; Telephone: 805 961-2951.

#### THE MEMORABLE XXI FIDEM CONGRESS

From the opening ceremonies which featured welcoming words in English, French, and a smattering of Japanese, to the well-planned receptions, the informative and delightful day trips, to the elegance of the closing banquet at the Broadmoor Hotel, the 50th Anniversary FIDEM Congress was a great success.

Hosted by the American Numismatic Association, the September 11 - 15 event featured several stimulating artists' workshops moderated by American sculptor John Cook. These included Czechoslovakian Jiri Hrabuba's "Carving Models for Medals and Coins", "The Technique of Gem Engraving" by Beverly Mazze of the United States, and a closed-circuit broadcast of France's Jacques Devigne demonstrating "Direct Die Engraving on Steel".



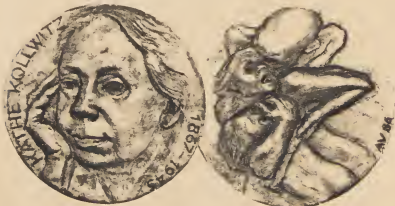
The renowned American artist Leonard Baskin delivered the keynote address delighting the gathering with slides and off-the-cuff descriptions of his own beloved collection of European medals. Lecture moderator Mark Jones of Great Britain introduced each of the scholarly speakers including Joseph Veach Noble ( "What Do Art Medals Say?" ), and Cory Giliiland ( "Medallist Tribute to an Artist" ) both of the United States, as well as a talk on his country's medals by Carlos da Silva of Portugal, and a discussion of the "official" medal commission by Canadian Dora de Padery-Hunt.

At all of the proceedings, the fine touch of FIDEM '87 Chairman Alan Stahl was evident - and frequently crucial to the smooth flow of events. All of us who attended the Congress owe Dr. Stahl our heartfelt thanks for being instrumental in bringing the FIDEM Congress to the United States and for his tireless efforts in making the Congress the success that it most certainly was.

#### FIDEM '87 - THE EXPOSITION & THE CATALOGUE

In his introductory paragraphs to the FIDEM '87 exposition catalogue, FIDEM President Lars O. Lagerqvist writes, "We are happy to present our message to the great American public, firstly in the form of a large international exhibition in the American Numismatic Association Museum in Colorado Springs, and secondly as a "choice" of the very best medals to travel during 1987 and 1988." The smaller select group will be on view in Berkeley, Washington, Tampa, and New York City.

The large international exhibition, which opened on September 11, and which will continue through December 19, is of 1500 medals by more than 700 artists from 25 countries, all executed during the last decade. Under the guidance of A.N.A. Museum Curator Robert W. Hoge, these many diverse works were brought together in a dazzling display - a landmark twentieth century exposition.



KATHIE KOLLWITZ BY AVRIL VAUGHAN OF GREAT BRITAIN

Highlights of the exhibition are "The Beach", a peaceful nude dreamer in copper by Japan's Tadashi Hattori, a powerful bronze of Kathie Kollwitz by

Britain's Avril Vaughan, and the complex four-part Finnish Medical Association 75th Anniversary award medal by that country's Kauko Rasanen. Spanish artist Lily Chu's bronze medal, "Childhood", is hauntingly familiar glimpse of a small girl in a doorway, while his countryman Jose Primates's "Artisan - The Umbrella-Maker" imitates the umbrella shape on its obverse and showers the world with umbrellas on its reverse.



JOSE PRIMATES'S "ARTISAN - THE UMBRELLA MAKER"

Czechoslovakia's Jiri Marcuba's portraits, combining incuse engraving with raised modeling, are both masterful and innovative. Of the French medals, most pleasing to the eye - and tempting to the hand - is Jean-Pierre Yvaral's "The Great Louvre", a pyramidal bronze with its subliminal rendering of the "Mona Lisa". Andre Bloc, also of France, delights us with his enchanting illustrative abilities in "Morel Mushrooms", and Jan Tesar's portrait of Orson Welles is as compelling as a face to face encounter with the steely-eyed actor.



ORSON WELLES BY JAN TESAR OF FRANCE

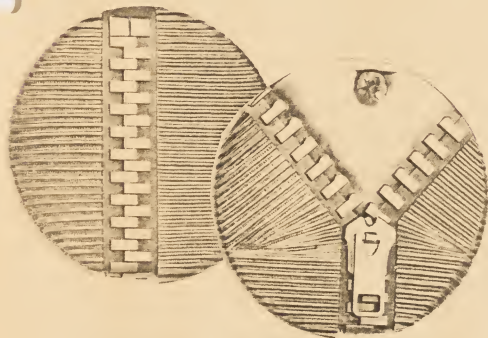
American work ranges in style from Gerta Wiener's humanistic portrait of Adolf Ochs to James Licaretz's close-up of two nude torsos entitled "Favorite Views", to John Cook's disturbing medals with their tiny dangling skulls and their innovative



"AMASIS, PAINTER" BY ALEX SHAGIN OF THE U.S.

handles. Alex Shagin's masterful interpretation of the Greek vase painter Amasis is a tactile medal which captures the artist's portrait on a shard of an ancient olla.

Marlette Coppens of Belgium has rendered a dreamy Chagallesque landscape with her interpretation of "Agriculture", and Polish medallist Gertruda Kusimska-Wilczopolska's portrait of Mother Theresa, the sad expressive eyes gazing at us from the partly veiled face, is both powerful and tender.



"OVERTURE" BY RICHARD KOLLER OF SWITZERLAND

The obverse of Swiss artist Richard Koller's intriguingly titled "Overture" appears innocent enough - a striated field divided by a vertical line of short, meshed horizontal dashes. When we turn to the reverse, we discover that the striated field is a textured garment and that the dashes are the teeth of a zipper, now slightly lowered to reveal a naked female midsection with a rivet-like navel. As with so many of the exhibition's medals, "Overture's" textured surfaces invite touch.

At least one example of each artist's work is illustrated in the 430-page exhibition catalogue. A brief biography of the artist is also given, as well as his or her current address. In many cases, copies of the medals are priced and available for sale. They may be obtained by contacting the artist directly.

To obtain a copy of the well-illustrated 435-page exhibition catalogue, please send a check for \$35. to: FIDEM 871 Catalog, 818 North Cascade Avenue, Colorado Springs, Co. 80903.

#### A GLOSSARY OF MEDALLIC TERMS, Part Six

This is the last of the series by Hedley Betts.

**MIS-STRIKE** A piece that has not been struck properly.

**MULE** ( Same as HYBRID ) a medal created by combining an obverse and reverse that would not normally be associated.

**NUMISMATICS** The study of coins and medals.

**NUMISMATIST** A person knowledgeable in numismatics.

**OBVERSE** The side of a medal bearing the main device, usually the portrait side, if a medal has one.

**OSELLA** A Venetian presentation piece given by the Doge to the council. The earliest were presented in 1522. The tradition continued until 1797.

**PADUAN** A medal in imitation of Roman or Greek coinage produced in Padua and in other northern Italian cities about the middle of the 16th century. Some of these medals were made as an artistic exercise; others were doubtless intended to deceive collectors.

**PARCEL-GILT** ( The same as DAMASCENED ) A medal with part or all of its relief gilded, but with its fields left ungilded.

**PATINA** The color of the surface of a medal, usually deliberately applied. Typically, copper and bronze medals are thus treated.

**PATINATE** To apply a patina.

**PIEDFORT** or **PIEFORT** A term most often applied to coins but sometimes to medals. A piece struck on an exceptionally thick flan.

**PIERCED** Descriptive of a medal which has a hole. It should be noted that some medals were issued with holes so that ribbons could be attached and the medals worn.

PINCHBECK A gold-colored alloy used in the 18th century in Britain to make inexpensive medals.

PLANCHETTE ( The same as BLANK and FLAN ) A piece of metal cut in the shape of a medal, but not yet impressed with a design.

PLANCHETTE DEFECT A defect in the metal of a medal.

PLAQUE A large, decorated tablet of metal, usually uniface.

PLAQUETTE A medal-like piece that is usually rectangular, or roughly so, rather than round.

PLUGGED Descriptive of a medal with a hole which has been filled. Many 18th and 19th century German whitmetal medals have copper plugs. They were acquired by law to distinguish them from silver pieces.

PORTUGALOSER A class of medallic coins produced in parts of Germany and eastern Europe for presentation rather than circulation. They imitated the portuguez, a large Portuguese gold coin. The tradition of striking portugaloser established itself, in particular, in Hamburg.

REBUS MEDAL In particular, a medal of Henri V, the French pretender, which has various articles representing syllables and words instead of a legend or inscription. In general, any medal bearing such a riddle.

RECHENPFENNIG ( The same as JETON and COUNTER ) A coin-like piece used in reckoning or in games.

REDUCING MACHINE The machine used to prepare dies by tracing the artist's model, reducing the design and cutting it into the metal of the die.

REFINISHED Descriptive of a medal that has had its original finish replaced by another, usually because the original has deteriorated. Medals that have been altered in any way are less desirable than pieces in their original intended state.

RELIEF The raised parts of a medal.

REPOUSSE A medal composed of thin shells of metal that have received their design by being placed over a mold and beaten into it to receive the detail.

RESTRIKE A medal struck from original dies at a later date.

REVERSE The side of a medal which bears the less important device or inscription.

RUST MARKS the raised impressions left on a medal struck from a die by the rust. Frequently

such marks indicate that a medal is a restrike.

STRUCK Descriptive of a medal that has been made by striking between two dies.

SPECIFIC GRAVITY The ratio of the mass of a particular substance to an equal volume of water. Since the specific gravity of different metals varies, a simple test can determine if a medal is a particular metal or not, solid gold or silver, for example, rather than a plated base metal.

TEST MARK A mark, such as that left by a file or acid, indicating that someone has tested the composition of a medal.

TIN ( Abbreviated Sn from the Latin stannum or WM for whitmetal ) A soft silver-like metal, the main ingredient in whitmetal alloys.

TONED Descriptive of a medal, usually silver, which has developed a colored surface over a period of time. Such color can be quite attractive and can enhance a piece.

TRUNCATION The point at which a bust is cut off, often represented by a scroll-shaped section that sometimes bears the artist's signature.

UNCIRCULATED A term sometimes used to describe a medal in its original condition, but more appropriate in describing coins rather than medals which do not circulate.

UNIFACE A medal with only one side.

VERDIGRIS A green encrustation, spots of which sometime occur on copper or bronze medals.

VIS A VIS ( French, "face to face" ) Two portraits facing one another.

WHITEMETAL A silver-colored alloy composed essentially of tin.

HB

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# THE MEDALLIST

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 4, MARCH 1988. E. J. LEOTTI, EDITOR. PUBLISHED QUARTERLY.



PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST'S FATHER BY HANS SCHWEGERLE  
95 MM BRONZE GALVANO, 1908

## A MYSTERY MEDAL

The piece itself, a bold portrait of the artist's father, Hermann Schwegerle, by German medallist Hans Schwegerle, is not a mystery. It is information on Hans Schwegerle and the Zeppelin portrait medals designed by him that proves to be illusive to the owner of the piece, a specialist in medals relating to Zeppelin airships.

The portrait pictured, a 95 mm bronze galvano dated 1908 and signed HS at the back of the neck, is a companion portrait to one of Schwegerle's mother done in the same year. These two works are among a scant twenty-odd by Schwegerle which Leonard Forrer lists in his *Biographical Dictionary of Medallists*. Forrer also tells us that Schwegerle lived in Munich and that he participated in the 1910 Brussels "Salon de la Medaille". He adds that many of the artist's medals were produced by Carl Poellath, a die sinker in Schrottenhausen. Beyond 1915, we can find no record of Schwegerle's work. We cannot learn when he was born, where he studied, and when he died.

Zeppelin medals by Schwegerle, according to Forrer, are: Harro, Freiherr von Zeppelin (1909); Harro Zeppelin (n.d., possibly the same as the first); Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin (63 mm, 1914-1915).

Information sought is as follows:

1. A biography of Hans Schwegerle.
2. Photographs of the Zeppelin medals listed, or, failing those, any citing or description of them.
3. The identity of "Harro, Freiherr von Zeppelin" and his relationship to Ferdinand. We believe that "Harro" is a name and that "Freiherr" is an honorary title, roughly equal to "Baron", bestowed upon a person other than a landowner.
4. Information about or photographs of any other Zeppelin medals with the signature HS or known to be by Hans Schwegerle.

Please send your findings to: Mystery Medal # 7, c/o  
The Medallist, 2521 1/2 S. Vista Way, Suite 30,  
Oceanside CA 92054.

## A DISCUSSION ON THE REDUCING MACHINE

The reducing machine, an aid to designers of coins and medals which was perfected in the 19th century, has yet to be accepted as a proper tool for artists. Nearly every artist, art historian and critic of the last 100 years has recorded an opinion on the subject, many of which appear in the following article. To moderate the discussion, we have breathed new life into a curious columnist known as The Lay Figure who posed questions on art for turn of the century issues of *International Studio* magazine. (See note) As The Lay Figure steps to the podium and our distinguished guests take their seats, let us quickly whisper that we will put words into only one mouth, that of The Lay Figure. Everyone else speaks for himself, with sources cited below.

## THE REDUCING MACHINE: BANE OR BOON?

The Lay Figure: Ladies and gentlemen, artists and critics, we have come together this evening to discuss that much maligned mechanism, the reducing machine. Is it a bane or a boon to the art of the medal? Let us open the discussion with Mr. Victor David Brenner, the Russian-born but truly American medallist master. Mr. Brenner, will you kindly provide a brief definition of the reducing machine? Please do feel free to add your own opinion of it.

V.D. Brenner: "The reducing-machine invented...early in the nineteenth century is a kind of pantograph. A steel point follows the surface of the model and transmits, by means of a bar, its movements to another point which cuts the design into the steel to a reduced scale. The models are made four or



five times larger than the actual size. This machine saves the artist much of the tedious work required in the cutting of dies by hand. It copies the model with slight modifications, and if due allowance has been made, it will need but little retouching in the die." 1



THE REDUCING MACHINE DEPICTED ON A 1928 MEDAL CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDALLION ART CO.

The Lay Figure: Thank you, Mr. Brenner for your succinct description. Is there anyone in the room who disagrees with Mr. Brenner for this apparatus? Is a welcome time-saver for the artist? I see several hands and I do believe I shall choose that of the noted art historian, Ms. Adeline Adams. Welcome, my dear. May we hear your thoughts?

Adeline Adams: "The invention of the reducing-machine makes it possible for the sculptor to expand his little medal idea [boldly] and freely in a large size. Here, as in every aid, there is also a snare. Often proportions which are reproduced with absolute accuracy on a changed scale no longer appear to be the proportions the artist has intended. It is argued by many purists that a thing which is meant to be small must be designed and modeled so,...and that details like horses' knees or woman's hair or children's cheeks, if modeled on a large scale, are treated with an insistence which in the reduction resolves itself into a mechanical absurdity. It is easily seen that in real life, Art and Science do not always clasp each other as cordially as in the allegories of the academic medal! Most sculptors, however, regard the reducing-machine as a legitimate and valuable aid." 2

The L F: Well stated for both sides, Ms. Adams. Who agrees with the lady's final statement that the machine is of legitimate value to the sculptor? John Flanagan, as one of America's pre-eminent masters of commemorative medals, you must certainly have some compelling perceptions to share with us.

John Flanagan: "The making of medals has, through the reducing machine, gradually during the past fifty years changed from an art apart to a branch of sculpture. They now can be produced by any sculptor who has a sentiment of relief." 3

The L F: A fascinating observation, Mr. Flanagan, but quite equivocal. I for one am unable to

determine whether you are for or against the invention, yet I observe that you sit with folded arms and a wry smile. Hmmm. I see that Ms. Adams' mauve glove is raised once again. Yes, dear lady?

Adeline Adams: "Now that the modern reducing-machine allows the artist fully to develop his design for a medal in a fairly large size before bringing it within the final small circumference, it is certainly well for him to bear in mind the admirable results obtained by the less sophisticated quattrocento methods. Never before has the medallist had at hand as many excellent mechanical aids as at present. Never before has he faced a greater need of remembering the value of clarity in his vision, of simplicity and sincerity in his touch." 4

The L F: Very nice, Ms. Adams - a word of caution to all those who employ the tool. Will anyone else speak in favor of the contrivance? I see that another lady has her hand raised but I cannot quite espy her visage beneath those ostrich plumes. Pardon? Of course, it is Agnes Baldwin. I was most impressed with your description of the reducing machine in your introduction to the catalogue of the 1910 International Exhibition in New York. Will you elaborate on its advantages now?

Agnes Baldwin: "Its advantages are undeniable, and to its invention we owe the delicate low relief with its manifold gradations which give perspective, atmosphere, and grace. The artist, once more as in the days of the Renaissance, lovingly and genially transmits his warm creative impulse through his finger-tips. Plastic form is created in his mind's eye, and takes shape under his obedient hands. Painters may introduce the pictorial element into a struck medal. Impressionism in both the sculptors' and painters' meaning may be applied to the struck as well as to the cast medal." 5

The L F: Prettily put, Ms. Baldwin. I see a blur of waving hands. The most vigorous seems to be attached to a gentleman in the second row, Graham Carey, I believe. Mr. Carey is a 20th century designer of struck medals, among which I especially recall the Harvard tercentenary commemorative. Mr. Carey, what do you think of the reducing machine as a means of producing medallion art?

Graham Carey: "It is a bad method. The artist is not forced to pay strict attention to the realities of his business, and therefore, in most cases, he neglects these realities. He thinks out a pattern which is to be imposed on cold metal, instead of which he deals with clay or plasticine. He works in relief when he is making something that may be eventually no bigger than his thumbnail. The ... technique [of the reducing machine] gives him unlimited freedom to fall into any number of artistic traps from which his ancestors were

protected. And in about 99 cases out of 100 he falls into them. A man cannot think out an engraved steel pattern unless he has engraved steel." 6

The L F: Well, there can be no doubt of Mr. Carey's stand on the subject. Thank you, sir. I see that Jean Babelon, former Chief Conservator at the Cabinet des Médailles Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, has risen to his feet, and I do believe I shall grant him the floor. Welcome, M. Babelon.

Jean Babelon: "[The] invention of the so-called 'tour à réduire' permitted the diameter of a model, executed on a more or less large scale by the artist, to be changed at leisure. That is, of course, a simplification; it is at the same time a danger. We know from experience that an amateur will frequently feel that there is a deception when, after examining an original model, and appreciating its qualities, he sees the corresponding medal issued by the press and conveniently reduced. In spite of an exactness which is very much praised, if the proportions remain strictly the same, the figure inscribed in our visual ground does not produce the same kind of fascination. It means that the mechanical reducing has to be performed with great scrupulousness. That is why, in recent times, many medallists showed a reaction against such practice. Some of them returned to the technique of casting, which requires very experienced workmen, and does not allow easy reproduction of a great number of examples. The advantage is that a greater suppleness is thus acquired, and at the same time that every specimen is endowed with more personality." 7

The L F: Merci, M. Babelon. I perceive that you view the 'tour à réduire' as a *bête noire* that we must nevertheless welcome to our artistic stable. Now then, I have just been made aware that due to a traffic tie-up on Intergalactic Highway 13, a few of our invited guests will be unable to attend our little gathering tonight. I am told that Ms. Baldwin has been authorized to speak for two of them: that very learned man of medallic arts and letters, Georg Habich, and Fritz Hornlein, early 20th century German medallist. Ms. Baldwin, if you don't mind rising to your pretty feet once more, may we call on you for Dr. Habich's thoughts?

Agnes Baldwin: "Dr. Georg Habich argues that the reducing-machine takes away from the strength which lies in a clearly expressed technique. This result Dr. Habich regards not as inevitable with all artists, but as a peril to which many succumb." 8

The L F: And Herr Hornlein's opinion, Ms. Baldwin?

Agnes Baldwin: "Hornlein believes firmly that only by reverting to the die-cutter's art is any advance possible in the future development of the medal.

[Along with two other] German medallists... Georg Reimer [and] Max Daslo, ... Fritz Hornlein take[s] an extreme position. They claim that the contemporaneous art is full of artificialities. They scorn the 'délicatesse' of the French artists as tricky minutiae, and regard the reducing-machine as a mechanical invention... which will be as fatal to the medallic art as mechanical methods have been to wood-carving. These artists believe that the work should be executed in the actual size of the projected medal, since only in this way can the freshness of the original conception be retained. [They] urge: 'Whoever has analyzed the great effect attained in the small diameter of an ancient Greek coin, will understand what working in the actual size and proper proportions means for the inner balancing of the composition.'" 9

The L F: Thank you Ms. Baldwin for providing some rather vehement arguments against the reducing machine. I note that the French have been made villains by dint of their 'délicatesse'. Is there anyone who will speak in favor of the use of the implement by our extraordinary French medallists? Ms. Baldwin again?

Agnes Baldwin: "Roty himself declared that he had never gone through the severe training of engraving the die, and could not have executed any of his medals without the reducing-machine." 10

The L F: Of course you refer to the great Louis Oscar Roty whose 1894 plaqueette, "France Mourning Over President Carnot" is considered by many to be a superb example of the results obtainable with utilization of the reducing machine. Is that Frank Higgins' derby hat I see raised in the air? Mr. Higgins, we know that you are a collector and a true connoisseur of medals. What is your judgment of the reducing machine?

Frank Higgins: "Without [it] ... the genius of a Saint Gaudens, a Brenner or a Roiné would count for very little in medallic work." 11

The L F: Another acerbic observation. And now I fear that we must give up our little hall in favor of another gathering, a rock group, I'm told. As many of you have yet to speak, I shall be delighted to wave the banner once again in the next issue of *The Medallist*. Do I hear any "Yees"? Splendid. And "Nays"? Nary a nay - carried by the "Yees". Until we meet again, then. I cede the podium to the moderator for the aficionados of schist and silica.  
To be continued...

Note: The Lay Figure was a buzzing fly who set out each month to torment International Studio readers by flinging out questions like, "Will Amateurs Spoil Art?" and "Is There Substance to Today's Sculpture?". Parrying the question was a gathering

of invisible philosophers such as "The Renaissance Artist" and "The Man with the Pipe", additional alter egos of the columnist who were easily manipulated into whatever conclusion he (or she) wished to reach, pricked and prodded along the way by The Lay Figure's barbs.

Footnotes:

1 Victor D. Brenner "The Art of the Medal" New York 1910 p 13.

2 Adeline Adams "The Art of the Medalist" The Numismatist July 1913 p 359.

3 John Flanagan In his 1921 Saltus Award acceptance speech, as quoted by Alan Stahl in the preface to Barbara Baxter's catalogue, The Beaux-Arts Medal in America ANS 1987.

4 Adeline Adams The Spirit of American Sculpture The National Sculpture Society New York 1929 p 107.

5 Agnes Baldwin, Introduction to The Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Contemporary Medals. ANS New York 1911 p xxi.

6 Graham Carey "Some Notes on the Design of Struck Medals" Liturgical Arts Vol 17: 2-4 Nov 1948 n.p.

7 Jean Babelon, at that time Chief Conservator at the Cabinet des Medailles Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris "The Medal in Art and Society" a paper read at the Royal Society of Arts, London, 28 June 1955 and printed in the Journal of the Royal Society of Arts Vol CIII 30 Sept 1955.

8 Agnes Baldwin Introduction to The Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Contemporary Medals ANS, New York 1911 p xxi (Citing Georg Hablich "Neuere Entwicklung der Medaillenkunst" Kunst u. Handwerk Munich 1906 Pt VII.)

9 Ibid p xxi.

10 Ibid p xx.

11 Frank C. Higgins "The Relation of This Year's Hudson-Fulton Celebration to Numismatics" Mehl's Numismatic Monthly Oct 1909 p 153.

A CATALOGUE OF BEAUX-ARTS MEDALS

The splendid "Beaux-Arts Medal in America" exhibition at the American Numismatic Society in New York will close on April 16. Even if you are unable to attend, you can enjoy a pleasurable stroll through four decades of American art and history, from the Victorian 180's to the waning hours of the First World War, by purchasing a copy of the exhibition catalogue.

Author Barbara Baxter's lively and articulate text includes a history of medallion art from its 19th century revival by the great French artist Henri Chapu, who inspired Augustus Saint-Gaudens to create the first of his many portrait "medallions", through Paul Manship's satirical 1918 "Kultur in Belgium" medal. Besides Chapu, a number of other European artists, notably Karl Goetz and David d'Angers, are given biographical coverage. American medallists include such major figures as Chester Beach, John

Flanagan and James Earle Fraser, as well as nearly forgotten artists, like Helen Mears and Frances Grimes. The text is augmented by Frank Deak's crisp photographs sprinkled liberally throughout.

A copy of The Beaux-Arts Medal in America by Barbara A. Baxter may be ordered from the American Numismatic Society for \$25, plus \$1. to cover postage and handling. Address your order to: The ANS, Broadway at 155th Street, New York NY 10032.

A REVIEW OF TWO IMPORTANT NEW HUNGARIAN BOOKS

BY RALPH R. SONNENSCHNEIN

Endre Bóna Medicina in Nummis Szegediensis Szeged KNER 1986 114 pp. (ISBN 963 7581 59 6)

János M. Mészáros Magyar Állatorvosi Érmek, Plaketek és Jelvények - Numismatic Tokens of Veterinary History in Hungary Budapest Kossuth Nyomda 1986 97 pp. + illus. (ISBN 963 232 177 4)

These recent Hungarian books are examples of the ongoing interest of our Western and Central European colleagues in medallion art and their traditional use of medals to commemorate individuals and events. Here, two academics have brought together all medals pertaining to their institution or profession, in informative, well illustrated volumes.

Bóna has gathered 87 medals commemorating the University of Szeged Medical School and individual members of its faculty, from the 1930's to the present. Such luminaries as Albert Szentgyörgyi, 1937 Nobel Prize winner in Physiology or Medicine, are included (fourteen medals in his case); and well known artists, among them Dora de Pédery-Hunt and Sándor Tóth, are represented. Except for a one-page summary in English, the text is entirely in Hungarian, but such information as date of production, name of artist, and size can be readily extracted from the description of each medal.

The text of Mészáros' work, duplicated in Hungarian and English, gives a detailed description of each of seventy-three 20th century medals and badges issued to commemorate Hungarian veterinary scientists or societies, or to serve as awards. (The word "Tokens" in the title is a bit of a misnomer.) Here again, those interested in Hungarian artists will find examples of the work of Walter Madarassy, József Reményi, and other renowned medallists.

These books are recommended for the specialist in medical or scientific medals, or the connoisseur of recent Hungarian medallion art. RRS

Dr. Sonnenschein has been building his collection of medals relating to science and medicine for more than fifteen years. Currently, he is cataloguing his collection on computer.



MISSOURI NUMISMATIC SOCIETY  
5005 SO. GRAND AVE.  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63111  
481-7630



MR. OLYMPIA MEDAL, 4 1/2 " CAST BRONZE BY KIRA OD, 1987  
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY THE ARTIST

#### THE REMARKABLE KIRA OD

The very different medal shown here is the first medallion venture of a young California artist, Kira Od. The cast bronze medal is an award presented to the top three winners in the annual "Mr. Olympia" bodybuilding competition.

Ms. Od, a self-taught graphic artist and sculptor, explains, "I was asked to design a coin-type medal, with a laurel wreath running around the edge on both sides." Determining that such a design would be "boring", but realizing that the medal must be made to hang around the winner's neck, she created her unique design, curving the laurel leaves into crescent shapes, thereby distributing the weight over 75% of the circle. The obverse figure of "Mr. Olympia" is modeled on a statuette of a famous turn of the century strongman, Eugene Sandow. The reverse figure is of "Joe Weider, Trainer of Champions".

Ms. Od says: "My 'Mr. Olympia' medal pleases me because I managed to juggle several challenges successfully, and the piece does not look dated. I included all the elements I was asked to include, balanced them, and even if I did stretch the botany a bit, I got the thing to hang straight."

She adds that, when hired by someone to "make art, I'll take the job after challenging him to do something great. 'Great' is a word missing from American art. It's not there. People don't want to deal with it. So we produce generations of artistic technicians at best, or at worst, social reactionaries. Warhol, Kienholtz, Rauschenberg, Stella, Johns - all these guys had something real to say, but they didn't make 'Great' art. Michelangelo did. There's a difference. Michelangelo got blood to

pump through marble; Jackson Pollack - did he do, anything that human? No. Pollack used paint to do what, with some effort, could be done with the right magazine in a bathroom. It's expressive; but the Human Element is missing.

This art fascinates - just like the grossly distorted bodybuilders - but it doesn't inspire awe. I look at this entire century of art as an enormous quest for understanding. Riding the wave of the Industrial revolution, artists struck out for a way to express themselves - against the camera - against exponential technological expansion. What a challenge. And on top of this, Michelangelo stands, smiling - testament to something more - something timeless - four or five hundred years old."

At present, Ms. Od continues in her self-set challenge to produce great art with a series of sculptures which she calls "Man and Measurement". She has no current commissions for medals, but having learned bronze casting with her "Mr. Olympia", she looks forward to future medal work, saying, "I know what I can do. Detail is so important. Paying attention to detail is as important as understanding the whole picture. They must be given equal time to produce great work."

#### ANS ANNOUNCES COMPETITION FOR MEDAL DESIGN

The venerable American Numismatic Society of New York has announced an open competition for the design of a medal to be presented to individuals who contribute \$5000 or more to its current Development Campaign fund drive.

The design of "The Endowment Medal" is left to the imagination of the artist, but it should relate to



the ANS and its "goals of the collection, preservation, investigation and display of coins, medals and paper money. It must bear the Society's name and its emblem of a cluster of oak leaves." Design submissions, which may be for a struck or a cast medal "of any shape, uniface, two-sided or multiple", will be accepted in the form of drawings as well as models. If a model is selected, the artist will be awarded \$5000. If a drawing is chosen, the artist will receive \$4000, with \$1000, to go to whoever translates the design to a usable model, either the winning artist or another sculptor. Entries must reach the ANS jury by June 1, 1988.

Besides being issued in silver as a gift to major campaign fund contributors, the Endowment Medal will be produced in bronze for sale to collectors of ANS issues. Thus, the winner of the competition will join the elite ranks of designers of previous Society issues, including V.D. Brenner, Daniel Chester French, and Marcel Jovine.

For complete contest rules, contact: Leslie Elam, Director, ANS, Broadway at 155th Street, New York, NY 10032; 212 234-3130.

#### NEW BAROQUE MEDALS TEXT AVAILABLE FROM BETTS

Hedley Betts of Campbell, California, announces the publication of *La Medaglia Barocca In Toscana* by Fiorenza Vannel and Giuseppe Toderi. Published in 1987 in Florence, Italy, it is a large format book, 24 x 34 cm, about 500 pages long with 149 plates illustrating 450 medals.

Collectors of Baroque medals have long been frustrated by the lack of an adequate published study of the field. *La Medaglia Barocca* as "a Corpus of the numerous medals produced in Tuscany during the Baroque period" should go a long way to fill this gap. The book provides biographical material on each artist (among them, Massimiliano Soldani, Antonio Selvi and Lorenzo Weber), and lists the works of each. The medals, which are reproduced in actual size, are described in detail, including biographical material on the individuals portrayed.

Mr. Betts expects a supply of *La Medaglia Barocca* to arrive soon with the price to be approximately \$175. To place an order, and to receive a copy of his Winter 1988 "Offering of Medals", contact: Hedley Betts, POBox 416, Campbell CA 95009; 408 266-9255.

#### NSS OFFERS DE LUE MEDAL

As part of its fund-raising drive to offset expenses incurred in mounting its landmark Fall '87 exhibit of sculpture at the Port of History Museum in Philadelphia, the National Sculpture Society is offering copies of its 90th Anniversary Medal by

well-known sculptor, Donald De Lue. The high relief 1 1/2" bronze medal will be the Society's gift to any individual who donates \$100. to the campaign.



NATIONAL SCULPTURE SOCIETY 90TH ANNIVERSARY MEDAL  
BY DONALD DE LUE

The obverse of the medal, shown here, is one of De Lue's beautifully bold designs, a vigorous male nude kneeling on a giant hand. The reverse of the medal bears the following legend: National Sculpture Society / Ninetieth Anniversary.

Donations are of course tax-deductible. For a lesser contribution of \$35, the Society offers a free year of its journal, *Sculpture Review*. For further information or to make donations, contact: National Sculpture Society, Office of Development, 15 E 26 Street, New York NY 10160.

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